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PERSIAN GULF  
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SCHIEFFER: This rapid escalation of the Persian Gulf fighting prompted an urgent White House meeting today, and Bill McLaughlin has details on that.

MCLAUGHLIN: President Reagan met today with his top national security advisers and approved a plan to immediately send 200 Stinger missiles to Saudi Arabia to meet the Iranian threat to Saudi shipping and installations in the Persian Gulf. Saudi ambassador Prince Bandar bin Sultan later went to the White House, where he was informed of the president's decision and given assurances that the U.S. intends to stand by Saudi Arabia. This afternoon, Bandar went to the Pentagon to discuss U.S. Air Force plans to supply Saudi Arabia more equipment. Sources say the Pentagon will also proposed using KC-135 tankers for airborne refueling of Saudi fighters so they can maintain constant air patrols. Western intelligence officials are especially concerned about Iranian sabotage of Arab oil facilities and suicide air attacks on gulf shipping. CBS News has learned that Great Britain and France have both cautioned the U.S. that any direct Western involvement in the gulf conflict now could incite Iran to begin those suicide attacks for which it has reportedly trained dozens of volunteers based at Bandar \*Bushir. CBS News has also learned that the Soviet Union is sending signals that it wants to avoid a superpower conflict in the Persian Gulf. Senior Soviet intelligence agents in Western Europe are spreading the word that the Kremlin does not object to U.S. efforts to keep the gulf open, and to help do that, the Pentagon is now considering sending another aircraft to join the U.S. fleet just outside the gulf. Bill McLaughlin, CBS News, the State Department.